



A Partnership That Works



growing

opportunities

2008 ANNUAL REPORT



A message from Marlin Miller:

Although 2008 marked the beginning of a difficult economic environment for our country, it was a good year for education in Pennsylvania. The governor and the Legislature reached agreement on a modification of state funding for education that provided much needed increases for urban school districts without seriously impacting all other districts. Hopefully this year's state budget will continue this effort in line with the governor's six year plan to improve urban educational opportunity with state generated funds rather than increased urban property taxes. If the Reading School District uses this increased funding wisely, and we believe that they will, we can expect real educational progress as measured by improved scores against state standards. Our Coalition has worked with many other groups in the state to improve school funding and we plan to continually monitor progress and success.

Monitoring progress by measuring results and making changes where indicated is a key activity in any successful organization. During 2008, and continuing into the current year, the Coalition has placed major emphasis on supporting the introduction of Performance Pathways measurement software into several of Berks County's school districts and is supporting planning for such introduction in several more.



Marlin Miller, Jr.
Chairman
Berks Business Education Coalition

This has been a joint effort with the Berks County Intermediate Unit with the objective of supporting all districts in the development of tracking systems that measure the value added each year for each grade and each individual student. The Performance Pathways program provides approaches for validating and modifying curriculum or instructional approaches based on tracking of student progress. The Coalition believes Performance Pathways to be a powerful tool that can have a significant impact on student learning once it becomes embedded in a school district's culture. For more information about this endeavor, please read the article on the following page. We look forward to reporting further progress on this initiative in future communications.

Throughout the year we continued to support our well-established programs: Career Pathways, InsideBerksBusiness, SAS inSchool Curriculum Pathways, and Higher Education/Basic Education Initiative. Bob Runkle, our Executive Director, continues to bring his high energy level and experience to all of these programs, and for this, we are fortunate and thankful.

Marlin Miller

Berks Schools Adopt Data-Informed Culture

A consortium of Berks County Schools has formed a partnership with Performance Pathways, Inc. and the Berks County Intermediate Unit to implement a “data-informed culture” into the educational process of their schools. Performance Pathways, named one of Pennsylvania’s top



emerging businesses in 2008, will provide professional development services modeling the best practices for using curriculum and assessment data to improve student learning.

The Berks Business Education Coalition is pleased to provide support to the partnership through supporting professional development costs and facilitating planning meetings among the partners. Currently three school districts, Boyertown Area, Oley Valley, and Wyomissing Area have completed a needs analysis program facilitated by Dr. Bena Kallick, a nationally recognized expert in using curriculum and

assessment data to improve learning. The districts will follow a comprehensive professional development program developed by Dr. Kallick to utilize student assessment data to modify curriculum and instructional practices focused upon improving student achievement. Five additional districts have participated in a facilitated needs analysis with Dr. Kallick as of this writing, and will begin to participate in planning professional development for their faculty members.

Performance Pathways uses a suite of tools to assist educators develop validated student assessments around the Pennsylvania Academic Standards, map curriculum to the standards, and incorporate student assessment results into a data warehouse to facilitate the analysis of the data to modify instructional practices. This process enables teachers to constantly monitor each student’s performance against the state standards, and to offer intervention strategies for each student when appropriate to enhance his or her performance.

The Coalition is very interested in this data approach to improving student achievement. The private sector has known for many years that the appropriate application of data is crucial to any continuous improvement model. Performance Pathways is an excellent model for providing educators the necessary tools to apply student assessment data to a continuous improvement program in education.

“We have worked with Performance Pathways closely for the past five years, and our partnership with Performance Pathways has grown to become an integral part of what we do in the Oley Valley School District. The products have really served us well.

Performance Pathway’s powerful and extensive array of digital tools equips us well to fully engage our staff in creating an innovative, 21st-century, collaborative learning community. The software programs give teachers and administrators a format for saving all of their student data in one place so they can develop an excellent snapshot of student achievement. They can share the data with colleagues and parents, and the data can be used to provide presentation information to school board directors in support of new and current educational programs.

We use these tools to enhance our student learning outcomes, monitor their progress, and maintain data vital to continuous program improvement and increased student learning.”

Linda Stubits, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent
Oley Valley School District





2008 in review

The Berks Business Education Coalition built upon the success of the previous year and remained focused on facilitating and supporting member schools' efforts to improve career planning, academic performance, and higher education enrollment of students in Berks County.

Career Pathways

The Career Pathways Strategic Team met throughout the year to assist member schools in providing quality career development for the students of Berks County. The team surveyed the needs of the schools with respect to the resources required to implement the Pennsylvania Career Education and Work Standards. The standards provide direction to the schools of Pennsylvania for ensuring that all students within the Commonwealth receive quality career development instruction at the appropriate level from elementary through secondary education.

Training sessions were attended by more than 200 career educators throughout the year to assist them in incorporating the career education and work standards into their instruction, and to utilize resources for career instruction. The Pathways team also facilitated training sessions on Web resources, including the Career Cruising Web site (www.careercruising.com), providing students the opportunity to develop online career portfolios, which can be updated and maintained throughout their educational program. Programs also were held throughout the year at which districts could showcase their best practices in career development.

The Coalition facilitated the establishment of a countywide internship and workplace experience program called BerksWorks. This program will serve high school and college students and is funded by the Berks County Community Foundation, the Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Coalition. The coordinator for the program will maintain a database of employers and

students interested in obtaining workplace experiences and will operate as a component of the career services department of the Penn State Berks campus. Symplicity Corporation software will provide the Web-based resource for the program.

The Coalition was fortunate to receive a third year of funding in the amount of \$50,000 under the Regional Career Education Partnership grant. The funding is being used to support educator training in the Career Pathway model, and to support the BerksWorks and InsideBerksBusiness internship program for teachers.

The Coalition participated in the successful acquisition of a career development federal regional grant written by the Lehigh Valley Workforce Investment Board covering 10 counties. Berks County will receive \$65,000 for the enhancement of its Career Pathways program, and two identified school districts will have the opportunity to receive \$5,000 each for the successful development of a Career Academy program in their districts. Additional resources also will be provided for the expansion of Career Cruising software and Business Education Partnership enhancement.

Performance Pathways

The Coalition is pleased to support member school districts in an exciting innovation that provides educators with the tools and expertise to make informed decisions about instructional modifications necessary to continuously improve student achievement.

Performance Pathways is a suite of tools including Performance Tracker, a data warehouse; Tech Paths, a curriculum-mapping tool; and Assessment Builder, an assessment development tool. The tools provide educators the opportunity to view student performance in conjunction with instructional curriculum and practices and modify instruction accordingly to improve student performance.



“Wyomissing Area School District is grateful for the support from the BBEC and the Performance Pathways Consortium. It is through this partnership that we are now able to implement technology tools that support student achievement and a data-informed school culture. The collaborative planning process has resulted in a needs assessment, a clear action plan, and benchmarks for implementation. BBEC has been instrumental in bringing about this multi-district partnership designed to benefit students, teachers and communities throughout Berks County.”

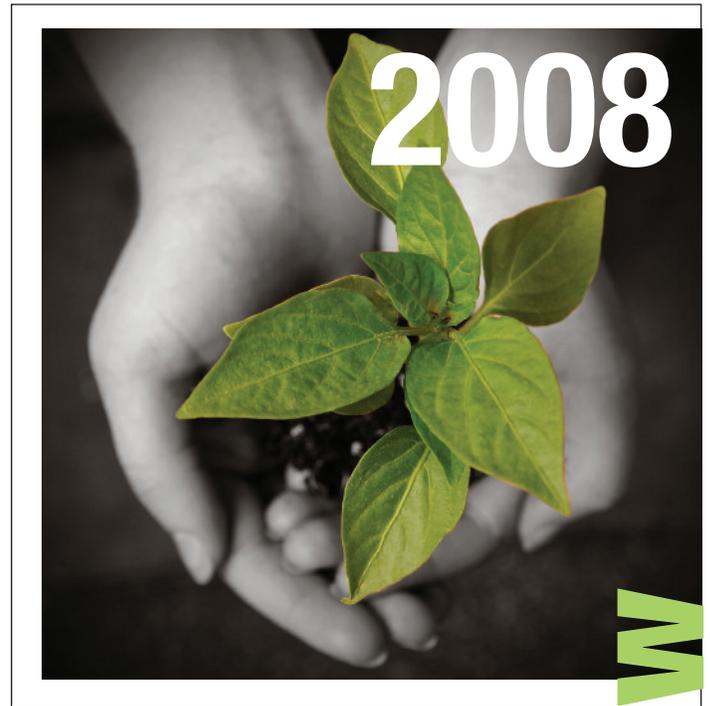
Pamela R. Pulkowski, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent
Wyomissing Area School District

Performance Pathways Incorporated, the Berks County Intermediate Unit, the Coalition, and identified member school districts have entered into a partnership designed to improve student learning through the implementation of a “data-informed” culture. Professional development services will be provided to identified school districts by Performance Pathways and the Berks County Intermediate Unit modeling the best practices for using curriculum and assessment data to improve student learning.

Dr. Bena Kallick, a nationally recognized expert in the field and co-author of *Using Curriculum Mapping and Assessment Data to Improve Learning* has played a critical role in the vision of the program for Berks County. Eight Berks County districts are part of the consortium and additional districts have expressed an interest in joining the partnership.

SAS inSchool Curriculum Pathways

The Coalition supported member schools in the continued implementation of this Web-based curriculum resource through providing supplemental funding to identified districts to assist them in improving access to technology in the classrooms using this resource. Professional development also was offered through the Berks County Intermediate Unit to assist teachers in integrating the resource into each school’s curriculum in all of the core disciplines.



Higher Education/Basic Education Initiative

The Higher Education/Basic Education Committee identified a need to facilitate dialog between college and high school faculty around strategies to increase post-secondary participation and to improve college readiness. The committee developed a survey to be administered to college and high school faculty. The survey is designed to collect information about each faculty member’s perception of the level of preparedness for entry-level college students in core academic subjects. Results of the survey will be shared with both faculty groups to inform discussions on the topic.

The Penn State Berks campus will host the first high school/college faculty meeting in February, which will include representatives from the county’s colleges and high schools. The Berks County High School Principals Association is providing support for the initiative and will assist the committee in the facilitation of the event.

The committee also supported and coordinated college tours and orientations for students in grades 8 and 9 from eight Berks County school districts. This activity provided students the opportunity to gain valuable insight into the key steps they need to take to prepare for college.

Berks Business Education Coalition

goal:

To support member schools in their efforts to facilitate the improvement of student academic performance.

- The Coalition will support member schools in the utilization of SAS inSchool software, a Web-based curriculum resource in the core academic areas.
- The Coalition will support the county schools in the development of Performance Pathways, an innovation designed to improve student achievement by informing the modification of curriculum and instruction through the use of student assessment data.

goal:

To support member schools in their efforts to increase the interest in and pursuit of higher education for all students in Berks County.

- To facilitate dialog between basic and higher education administration and faculty designed to achieve the stated goal.
- To facilitate high school student visits to Berks County college campuses.
- To facilitate an ongoing exchange of ideas between high school and college faculty targeted toward enhancing the college preparedness of incoming college students.





Goals and Objectives 2008-2009

goal:

To support member schools, employers and community-based organizations in providing quality k-12 career development programs for students in Berks County.

- The Coalition will support member schools throughout the year in offering training sessions on career resources and strategies to enhance career instruction.
- The Coalition will facilitate and support the implementation of a countywide internship program called BerksWorks for high school and college students.



goal:

To provide for the viability and sustainability of Coalition programs and services.

- To pursue grant opportunities in consort with the mission of the Coalition and in support of member schools and employers.
- To facilitate communication among Coalition members and promote membership in the Coalition through the enhancement of the BBEC's communication tools, including the Web site, newsletters, and annual report.
- To facilitate an evaluation of programs and activities of the Coalition on an annual basis, and to recommend modifications where recommended and appropriate.

inside **BERKS** business: 
A five-day learning experience for educators

The Berks Business Education Coalition assisted the Berks County Intermediate Unit (BCIU) in a redesign of the Educator Internship program that the BCIU had operated for many years. The program provided educators a six-week internship program in the private sector designed to enable teachers to bring the lessons learned in business back to their students.

Participation in the program had declined to the point where it was no longer viable. The BCIU, in cooperation with the Coalition, met with the internship advisory committee during the 2007-2008 school year to retool the program. The new program, called InsideBerksBusiness, is a five-day educator-in-the-workplace program designed to give teachers an insider's look at local businesses.

The program ran during the summer of 2008 and included 27 educators from 14 different school districts and 16 different Berks County employers.

The first part of the program includes a pre-internship meeting, where the intern becomes familiar with the host business and the business has an opportunity to learn about the intern's background and interests. The first day includes a business orientation, including a company overview, discussion with members of the company's human resources department, and a company tour.

Days two through four include department/site visits, job shadowing, special meetings and presentations, and a small business project. The fifth day is a seminar, which includes a company tour, sharing of experiences, and a presentation of a project by the educators to their business mentors.

Each participant is required to complete a school project that includes a slide show about his or her business experience and outcomes of the program and a classroom project abstract that describes plans for integrating career awareness



activities into existing lessons. The benefits to business include the opportunity to market careers facing critical workforce shortages, to demonstrate which skills are vital to business success, and to influence the educational program.

“The internship gave me a greater understanding of the skills and experiences students need in a high-tech manufacturing company such as Carpenter Technology,” said Kevin Stump, a Boyertown Area Junior High West teacher, who served his internship at Carpenter. “I also learned of the activities and concerns faced by corporations.”

Cathi Witmer, a Conrad Weiser High School teacher, served her internship with the Reading Hospital and Medical Center. “It was exciting to see what businesses expect from our students,” she said. “I was intrigued by the technology that the hospital used in its day-to-day operations. We’re always concerned that we send students out into the ‘real world’ with useful tools to make them successful (with or without a college degree).”

The BCIU, the Coalition, and the entire advisory board for InsideBerksBusiness are very pleased with the outcome of the 2008 program and look forward to the session that will be held in summer 2009.

Information about InsideBerksBusiness can be found on the BCIU website at www.berksiu.org/ibb or by contacting Connie Skipper at 610-987-8496.





financial report

Financial Statement – Calendar 2008 and 2007

Operations

Operating Income:

Business/Foundation	
Education	
Interest on Savings	
Program Operating Support	
Total Operating Income	

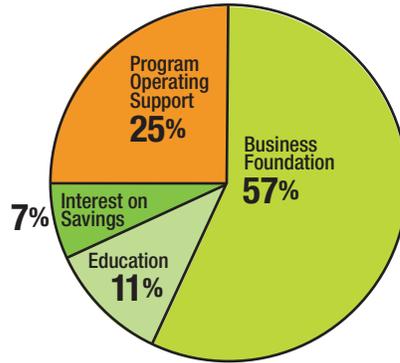
Operating Expenses:

Salaries and Benefits	
Other Operating Supplies and Expenses	
Total Operating Expenses	

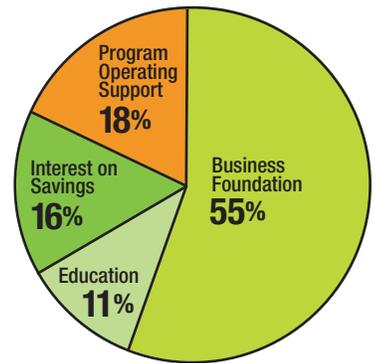
Operating Gain (Loss)

	2008	2007
Operating Income:		
Business/Foundation	53,550	61,950
Education	10,750	11,800
Interest on Savings	6,368	17,604
Program Operating Support	23,750	20,317
Total Operating Income	\$94,418	\$111,671
Operating Expenses:		
Salaries and Benefits	78,150	67,886
Other Operating Supplies and Expenses	31,090	31,634
Total Operating Expenses	\$109,240	\$99,520
Operating Gain (Loss)	(\$14,822)	\$12,151

2008 Operating Income



2007 Operating Income



Programs

Program Funding:

Business (Ed Impvt Tax Credit Contrib.)	63,000
State and Federal Funding	65,248
Foundation	70,000

Total Program Funding

Program Expenditures:

SAS in School Project	53,000
Career Education Partnership Project	73,625
BerksWorks	70,000

Total Program Expenditures

Program Gain (Loss)

Total Gain (Loss)

Financial Position

Total Assets - Cash and Investments

Less Assets Deferred for Future Program Projects

Assets/Equity available for Operations

	2008	2007
Program Funding:		
Business (Ed Impvt Tax Credit Contrib.)	63,000	266,604
State and Federal Funding	65,248	80,846
Foundation	70,000	
Total Program Funding	\$198,248	\$347,450
Program Expenditures:		
SAS in School Project	53,000	266,219
Career Education Partnership Project	73,625	89,280
BerksWorks	70,000	
Total Program Expenditures	\$196,625	\$355,899
Program Gain (Loss)	1,623	(8,449)
Total Gain (Loss)	(\$13,199)	\$3,702
Total Assets - Cash and Investments	\$410,261	\$447,885
Less Assets Deferred for Future Program Projects	(\$344,050)	(\$398,476)
Assets/Equity available for Operations	\$66,211	\$79,409



membership list

- Albright College
- Alvernia University
- Antietam School District
- Automotive Services, Inc.
- Beard Miller Co., LLP
- Berks Career & Technology Center
- Berks County Community Foundation
- Berks County Intermediate Unit
- Berks Technical Institute
- Bills Khakis, Inc.
- Boscov's Department Store
- Boyertown Area School District
- Brandywine Heights Area School District
- E. J. Breneman, Inc.
- Brentwood Industries
- C.H. Briggs Hardware Company
- Cabot Corporation
- Carpenter Technology Corporation
- Community Banks
- Connors Investor Services, Inc.
- Conrad Weiser Area School District
- Daniel Boone Area School District
- Dempsey's Restaurants, Inc.
- Diocese of Allentown
- East Penn Manufacturing Company, Inc.
- Easter Seals Eastern PA
- J.C. Ehrlich Company Inc.
- Elge Precision Machining
- EnerSys, Inc.
- Exeter Township School District
- Fleetwood Area School District
- Fulton Bank/Great Valley Division
- Giant Food Stores, LLC
- Governor Mifflin School District
- Greater Reading Chamber of Commerce & Industry
- Hamburg Area School District
- Mr. Thomas Handwerk
- Herbein + Company
- Hofmann Industries
- Home Builders Association of Berks County
- J. F. Horigan, Jr.
- Junior Achievement of Berks County
- Kutztown Area School District
- Kutztown University
- M&T Bank
- Met-Ed, a First Energy Company
- Muhlenberg School District
- National Penn Bank
- Offset Impressions, Inc.
- Oley Valley School District
- Olsen Design Group
- Pace Institute/Pace Management
- Penn State Berks
- Penske Truck Leasing Co.
- Performance Sports Apparel, Inc.
- Quality Investment Castings, Inc.
- Quadrant Engineering Plastic Products
- Reading Area Community College
- Reading Eagle Company
- Reading Electric
- Reading Hospital & Medical Center
- Reading Precast
- Reading School District
- Reading Muhlenberg Career & Technology Center
- David W. Rohrbach
- Mr. Philip Rowe, Jr.
- Mr. Rolf Schmidt
- Schuylkill Valley School District
- SFS intec, Inc.
- Sovereign Bank Foundation
- Stevens & Lee
- Susquehanna Bancshares Inc.
- Tray-Pak Corporation
- Tulpehocken Area School District
- Twin Valley School District
- UGI Utilities, Inc.
- VF Corporation
- Verizon
- Wachovia
- Weidenhammer Systems Corporation
- Wilson School District
- Wyomissing Area School District



bbec

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Reading Electric

Dr. Thomas R. Chapman
Reading School District

James Connors
Connors
Investor Services

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EnerSys, Inc.

Rhoda E. Dersh
Pace Management, Inc.

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Fleetwood Area
School District

Philip J. Fromuth
Diocese of Allentown

Brian Hard
Penske Truck
Leasing Company

Ellen T. Horan
Greater Reading
Chamber of
Commerce & Industry

Dr. Helen Larson
Wyomissing Area
School District

Dr. Solomon Lausch
Schuylkill Valley
School District

William Long, Sr.
M&T Bank

Sallie Miksiewicz
East Penn
Manufacturing

Dr. Susan Phillips Speece
Penn State Berks

Roger Schmidt
E.J. Breneman

Rolf D. Schmidt
Performance
Sports Apparel

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a FirstEnergy Company

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John Weidenhammer
Weidenhammer Systems
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Governor Mifflin
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Consultants, Inc.

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Reading Hospital &
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Oley Valley School District

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